

News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Indiana Takes the “Work” Out of Work Permits

Fort Wayne, IN – It may not be glitzy, but the Indiana Department of Labor’s new Online Work Permit System for teen work permits will save the state and Indiana schools time and money, and effectively take the “work” out of work permits.

Before the launch of the new system, Indiana schools hand-issued between 87,000 and 127,000 paper permits each year, parts of which had to be either kept on file by the schools or mailed to the Department of Labor. The new system eliminates mailing costs and the need for schools and the Department of Labor to maintain copies of each work permit. It is also the first step toward creating a totally paperless work permit.

This Spring businesses hiring teens should be on the look-out for the new work permits as teens enter the summer job market. The work permits, which must be kept on file with the employer, will now be on plain 8 ½ ” x 11” paper with an identifiable hologram, instead of the traditional green cardstock.

Pete Rimsans, deputy commissioner of labor said, “The new Online Work Permit System takes the work permit process into the 21st Century and allows schools to focus on their primary mission of education.”

Indiana law requires that teens between the ages of 14 and 17 obtain a work permit from the school they attend before they become gainfully employed. With this new system, schools logon to the secured web site and establish profiles for each teen worker. The school then can (1) add a work permit, (2) terminate an existing work permit, or (3) revoke a work permit

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for grades or attendance deficiencies. The system uses logical checks to make sure that the teen won't be working too many hours or in an industry that is deemed to be hazardous.

Currently more than half of all Indiana high schools are using the new system and Rimsans predicts that number will grow as word spreads.

According to Cheryl Strader, issuing officer at Northrop High School, over 750 work permits were issued to students last year. This year to date, 560 have been issued. "With this new system, we can drastically cut down the turnaround time to issue work permits. No more messy carbon paper and typewriters, so making changes to a students record will be much easier. And most importantly, we will be better able to track our teen workers to ensure that they are balancing work with school," said Strader.

Indiana is the second state in the nation to develop and deploy such a system, but the first to do so with next to zero in development costs, thanks to the *accessIndiana* – the state's official Web portal (www.IN.gov) – self-funded model. The *accessIndiana* revenue model allows premium, fee-based, Internet services such as driver's license renewals to fund less highly demanded projects such as the work permit system. According to Rimsans, "Other states have spent between \$100,000 to \$200,000 on developing their work permit systems, yet Indiana has out performed them with regard to both savings and functionality."

Schools, parents, teens, and businesses that have questions about the new work permits may contact the Indiana Department of Labor's Bureau of Child Labor at 1-888-TEENWORK. They can also learn more about work permits and other requirements of Indiana's child labor laws by logging onto www.teenworker.IN.gov.

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This release is available on the Internet at <http://www.IN.gov/labor/childlabor/news.html>

About *accessIndiana*

accessIndiana (www.IN.gov), the state's official Web portal, has provided Indiana citizens and businesses with 24/7 access to state government information and services since 1995.

Hoosiers can renew driver licenses and vehicle registrations, pay Indiana individual income taxes, make reservations at state park campgrounds and inns, renew professional licenses, research Indiana law, track legislation on the House and Senate floors, identify and contact legislators, as well as conduct secure business transactions from the comforts of their own home or office. *accessIndiana* averages 25 million accesses each month, getting Hoosiers *online* instead of *in line*.

Home to more than 220,000 pages of information and hundreds of interactive services, *accessIndiana* is operated without the appropriation of any tax dollars. About 99 percent of the services and information available through *accessIndiana* are provided to the public at no charge. Primary funding for the portal comes from modest convenience fees—Enhanced Access Fees—for a select set of online services. These Enhanced Access Fees support the portal's Web development, maintenance, hosting and marketing costs.
